

AFRICA NEWS REPORT



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ENGLISH VERSION

ISSUE #826

February 17, 2004

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AEF302 02/11/2004

Bush Announces Nominee for U.S. Ambassador to Chad

(Marc Wall is selected for the post) (130)

Washington -- President Bush February 11 announced his intention to nominate Marc M. Wall to be ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Chad.

Wall, from the state of Virginia, is a career member of the senior foreign service who currently serves at the U.S. Department of State as director of the African Affairs Bureau's Economic Policy Staff, according to a White House announcement. Before taking that position, he taught at the National Defense University in Washington, D.C., and before that he served as an economic officer at the American Institute in Taiwan.

Wall earned his bachelor's degree from Princeton University and his master's degree from Columbia University.

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

AEF301 02/11/2004

Wolfowitz Cites Importance of Africa In U.S. Security Policy
(Defense official highlights partnerships at ACSS Senior Leader Seminar) (1100)

By Jim Fisher-Thompson

Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The Pentagon's number two civilian, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, February 9 told more than 120 military and defense officials from Africa that America would stand shoulder to shoulder with them to counter a wave of international terrorism that threatens the security of not only their continent but the whole world.

At the same time, he called on the leaders to live up to their responsibilities to work together to encourage economic growth and political participation and to enhance security both in their own countries and in the region.

"I'm told there's an African proverb...it says, 'One hand alone cannot tie a bundle.' Let the United States and the nations of Africa work together to find solutions to the problems we face," especially terrorism, the official said.

Wolfowitz, a defense intellectual who has been described by some as a driving force behind the new U.S. policy of forward engagement that resulted in a U.S.-led coalition of forces undertaking action in Afghanistan and Iraq, was speaking at the beginning of the Senior Leader Seminar sponsored by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS) February 8-20 in Washington, D.C.

ACSS is part of the Defense Department's (DOD) National Defense University and runs workshops on issues like defense budgeting and the proper role of militaries in democracies. Top military and defense officials from 44 African nations are attending the ACSS seminar whose director, former Marine Corps General Carlton Fulford, described it as an opportunity for African leaders to share experiences and work toward solutions to common security problems.

According to Wolfowitz, "Africa has already been drastically hurt by terrorism. We remember not only the bombings in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi in 1998, but more recently in Mombasa and in Casablanca. The global war on terrorism, in other words, is not only an American concern or a concern of the developed world; it is a growing African concern as well. We are

working closely with many of our partners in Africa to combat terrorism. The Pan-Sahel Initiative and the East Africa Counter-terrorism Initiative are a key part of our efforts in that regard on the African continent."

He added, "I hope that you can understand as I do that good governance and democracy, security and economic growth are as essential to the global war on terrorism as direct action. The United States looks forward to working with African countries on all fronts in this war."

Hammering home his anti-terrorism message, Wolfowitz said, "When the United States acts in the world we do not act by ourselves but as part of a community of states, and we see our strength multiplied by the contribution of others and our interests advanced when the interests of others are advanced."

In that regard, Wolfowitz noted that NATO is taking a prominent role in the operation against terrorists in Afghanistan, while in Iraq the United States is countering die-hard resistance by adherents of Saddam Hussein with the help of militaries from 26 nations.

U.S. worldwide commitments "have grown even more global in scope since the terrible attacks of September 11th and the global war on terrorism which occupies so much of our attention," Wolfowitz explained. "But despite our commitments elsewhere, African nations should have no doubt about the importance my country attaches to Africa."

There are many reasons for this, the U.S. official said, "including humanitarian ones, but we also as a country need to view Africa from a perspective of security -- both that our relationships with Africa can contribute to security on the continent and that security in Africa can contribute to security in the United States.

Wolfowitz told his audience the war on international terrorism "has brought us to put together a coalition of more than 90 countries," employing not only the military but "intelligence agencies and law enforcement agencies and even the foreign ministries of our respective countries to pursue terrorists and to capture them and to get them off the street."

With that in mind, he said, "We want to build partnerships that manage concerns and ensure compatibility among our forces. We want to share intelligence with our friends. In some cases American forces will be in a supporting role. In other cases we will be supported by others. The U.S. government, through the Agency for International Development, the Department of State, and our own programs in the Department of Defense and many other governmental agencies, is supporting efforts to develop democratic institutions, to promote economic growth, to develop peacekeeping mechanisms, to support humanitarian operations, and many other programs in Africa."

As an example of U.S./African partnerships, Wolfowitz said, "We were in a supporting role when West Africa and ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) forces intervened last year in Liberia -- a crucial supporting role, however, as I had the occasion to observe at the time.

"Our goal as much as possible is to increase the capacity of our friends to provide for their own security. But we do believe that the militaries of African countries can and must attain a higher degree of professionalism, one that is better suited to the challenges of the 21st century."

Repeating his belief that "strengthening institutions in Africa has got to be the key to moving forward," Wolfowitz said "Africa is now at a crossroads in political, military and economic terms. We see the prospect of peace finally at hand in Sudan even though negotiations are still ongoing. Countries such as Botswana

are successfully tackling their economic development problems at the same time that they are consolidating democracy and managing their AIDS crisis."

Speaking directly to the African officers and officials in the audience, Wolfowitz said, "As leaders in your countries, you have a tremendous responsibility to help lead your societies in a direction that encourages economic growth and genuine political participation. Too often irresponsible actions by government officials hinder the ability of their people to achieve prosperity. The challenge for you as national and regional leaders, both civilians and military, is to work together to solve the problems facing the nations and regions that you represent.

"In our view, in order for the security sector of your governments to contribute effectively to this end, three principles are critical: ensuring civilian control in military reform, developing military professionalism, and building a capacity to serve the nation's military needs appropriately."

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

AEF202 02/10/2004

Africa Is Still Ripe for Terrorism, Top Pentagon Official Asserts

(Vincent Kern cites positive security partnerships at ACSS seminar) (830)

By Jim Fisher-Thompson

Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- "Africa has been, is now, and will be into the foreseeable future ripe for terrorists and acts of terrorism," Department of Defense (DOD) official Vincent Kern told more than 120 senior African military officers and civilian defense officials at the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS) seminar February 10.

Kern, who is special assistant to the deputy assistant secretary of defense for stability operations, further explained to the participants in the February 8-12 Senior Leader Seminar in Washington that it therefore made sense for the DOD to focus on programs that help Africans battle this international scourge.

In that regard, he added, military-to-military partnerships are being strengthened with African nations to ward off terrorist outrages like the bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 that killed far more Africans than Americans.

(The DOD program mirrors similar partnership efforts by the U.S. Government under the President's Emergency Plan for African Relief and other initiatives to help Africans fight the growing HIV/AIDS pandemic, which also threatens the future stability and development of the continent.)

Forty-four African nations sent representatives to the annual ACSS seminar, which works to upgrade the professional skills of African military and civilian leaders in areas like defense budgeting and securing a stable security environment.

According to an ACSS document, the event also "provides a forum for military and civilian leaders from across the African continent to share their experiences and work toward joint solutions to their common problems."

Addressing the February 10 plenary session, retired Marine Corps General Carl Fulford, who is now ACSS director said, "It is a declaration of our commander in chief [President Bush] that [terrorism] is of top importance." Therefore, he said, "pushing anti-terrorism as an element of security strategy" has become an important part of the ACSS training syllabus.

Kern said U.S. concern for terrorism on the continent rose sharply after September 11, 2001 -- the day the terrorist network al Qaeda, whose leader Osama bin Laden once lived and worked in Sudan, organized attacks in America that killed 3,000 people. "In mid-November 2001," he said, "Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld warned Sudan and Somalia, among other countries, not to harbor terrorists who were fleeing Afghanistan," where bin Laden had taken refuge and was being supported by its Taliban regime.

The United States was concerned about the situation in the entire Horn of Africa region. "Accordingly, in 2002, the United States created a Combined Joint Task Force for the Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) of U.S. soldiers based initially offshore and later in Djibouti," Kern explained. That force, now at 1,800 troops, is "engaged in a range of exercises and civil-military operations such as hospital and school renovation."

The CJTF effort in the Horn also includes "joint [military] exercises with local military forces because we do not desire any long-term presence in Africa beyond what is necessary to help to defeat terrorists, and we believe that ultimately it is the nations of the Horn which must defeat terrorism and keep it defeated."

Continuing to highlight East Africa, Kern pointed out that in June 2003, "President Bush announced a \$100 million, 15-month Eastern Africa Counter-terrorism Initiative under which the United States is expanding and accelerating our counter-terrorism efforts with Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Uganda, Tanzania and Eritrea."

That program, he said, was designed to counter terrorism by focusing on coastal and border security; police and law enforcement training; immigration and customs; airport/seaport security; establishment of a terrorist tracking database; disruption of terrorist financing; and "community outreach through education, assistance projects and public information." Kenya, for example, will receive training and equipment for a counter-terrorism police unit aimed at "building an elite Kenyan law enforcement unit designed to investigate and react to terrorist incidents."

Another area of DOD concern in Africa -- the Sahel region -- is covered in a new program called the Pan Sahel Initiative (PSI), which Kern said is "a Department of State program (implemented by DOD and civilian contractors) designed to assist Mauritania, Mali, Niger and Chad in protecting their borders [and] tracking movements of persons."

The PSI initiative is a partnership involving 60 days of training for select country units, as well as equipment including Toyota Land Cruisers, uniforms and helmets, electric generators, fuel containers, communications gear and medical supplies, Kern said.

While equipment and training are an important part of U.S./African security partnerships, Kern told his audience: "We need to continue to listen to Africans as we develop initiatives and responses" to the threat of international terrorism. "I think we have done a good job so far, but we need to guard carefully against trying to dictate to our friends and allies in Africa."

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

AEF501 02/13/2004

U.N. Special Rep. Swing Optimistic on Congo Transition

(Reports on MONUC security/peace force at U.N. and Wilson Center) (810)

By Jim Fisher-Thompson

Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where "everything is broken but the human spirit," there is still "vibrancy" and "a lot of goodwill," U.N. Special Representative to the DRC William Swing told a meeting at the Woodrow Wilson International Center February 12.

"People want to get involved in the [political] transition" and make up for a civil war that has brought death to more than 3.5 million Congolese. And the U.N. is making progress helping them toward that goal, he said.

The career diplomat and former U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, South Africa, Haiti and DRC, who now heads the U.N. Observer Mission to the Congo (MONUC), gave a "peace-building update" to Africanists, government officials and journalists at a Council on Foreign Relations/Search for Common Ground event. Swing explained that he had given a similar briefing to the U.N. Security Council in New York the day before.

Swing reported that MONUC currently fields 10,000 troops from 109 nations under a \$641 million budget. It operates through 24 field offices in the DRC and also has liaison offices now in other countries including Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi. A new office is slated to open in South Africa next month. To get information out about the U.N. mission and the transition, Swing said MONUC established Radio Okapi, which is now the most wide-ranging station in the country, broadcasting in five languages.

Swing was named to head MONUC after the peace-building force was established in October 1999 to provide security for the political transition in DRC. He said he felt more progress on the security front could now be made in the war-torn nation because of MONUC's Chapter VII role, which under U.N. rules allows it to use "all necessary [military] means" to protect MONUC troops and civilians.

Force protection remains important, Swing emphasized, as he reported on the death that day of one of MONUC's military observers, noting, "There is still a great deal of risk out there for our troops, who are doing a magnificent job."

Swing said, "I'm working with people who have had 20 to 30 years of experience in the U.N. -- I've only been there a couple of years myself -- but it's working out well. My only role is to make sure that everyone is working on this transition with the same sense of urgency that I and MONUC have to try to make this happen according to the schedule the Congolese have set for themselves" with elections set for June 2005.

Swing said he began a proactive strategy of deploying up to 10,000 troops in Bunia, in eastern Congo, to guard against further massacres of civilians and help ensure the orderly repatriation of foreign forces back to countries like Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. The deployment involves shifting elements of two MONUC brigades, located in Ituri and Kivu -- some 9,000 troops -- to five other spots in the troubled Bunia sector. A guard force of approximately 1,000 troops is also stationed in Kinshasa providing security for members of the new transitional government. That force will later be deployed to areas in the east, he added.

In addition to MONUC protecting internally displaced refugees in Bunia, Swing said, "Refugees are [also] in every one of Congo's nine neighbors,... more neighbors than any other country in Africa. What I'm interested in is two-way traffic. I want the

armed groups going out [of DRC] and the refugees coming back."

Along with force and civilian protection, Swing said another important goal of the Bunia deployment was to disrupt "the vicious triangle" of arms trading. Although there is a U.N. arms embargo in place, the flow of weapons into the region, purchased through the illegal harvesting of precious resources like rare timber and minerals, is virtually unhindered. Moreover, Swing said, "this fuels the conflict that in turn leads to more arms purchases," Swing said. Interdicting the illegal trade is not an easy task, considering there are 325 airfields to be monitored in Bunia.

Even with these challenges, Swing told his audience, "there are reasons to be encouraged" about progress in DRC.

"Despite four years of war; 12 years of instability and 44 years of political and economic mismanagement," he said, "national unity is intact. The Congolese people are one -- they want to be one, they don't want to be something else -- and during this entire war...I think it's safe to say there was never any talk about a secessionist movement. People are unified by war fatigue. They are unified in the hope of a peace dividend with security now."

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AEF201 02/10/2004

Liberian Leader Calls U.S. Trip "Highly Successful"

(Bryant says U.S. resources will be spent wisely to build a peaceful Liberia) (870)

By Charles W. Corey

Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Gyude Bryant, the chairman of Liberia's National Transitional Government, described his recent trip to the United States as "highly successful" and expressed hope that U.S.-Liberian relations will soon "enter a new and more dynamic stage."

Speaking in Washington February 9 as the National Press Club's "Afternoon Newsmaker," the day before holding talks at the White House with President Bush, Bryant told reporters he was in the United States to mobilize international support for his country's long-term reconstruction in the post-Taylor era, referring to former President Charles Taylor.

(After emerging from his February 10 talks with President Bush at the White House, Bryant told waiting reporters that he thanked Bush for helping Liberia "strengthen our fragile peace. ... We are very grateful..." Bryant also said he pledged to President Bush that U.S. resources would be spent wisely to build a new and peaceful Liberia that would be at peace with herself and her neighbors and would be a point of stability for all of West Africa.) In his remarks at the National Press Club, Bryant reminded his audience that he had just arrived in Washington from New York, where he attended the February 5-6 International Reconstruction Conference on Liberia at the United Nations, which was co-sponsored by the United States.

That event, he said, sought to raise \$488 million from the donor community for priority reconstruction, security, demobilization of combatants, rule of law, health education and basic infrastructure.

Bryant was happy to report that the donor community had exceeded that goal, raising \$520 million, with the United States pledging \$200 million for humanitarian and reconstruction needs and another \$245 million for U.N. peacekeeping operations.

"Considering the much vaunted donor fatigue which often afflicts requests of this nature," Bryant said, "the New York

response indeed demonstrates considerable international good will for our reconstruction program."

Bryant expressed his country's "thanks and gratitude" to the United States, the United Nations, the World Bank and all other partners who participated at the U.N. conference. "We particularly appreciate the

very supportive role of the United States," he said, "a country that we often consider our traditional friend and partner," whose bilateral assistance has helped Liberia's "war-weary and poverty stricken" people in their early efforts to rebuild their nation.

"We hope that these latest acts of kindness and generosity are the beginning of a new sense of direct U.S.-Liberia relations, which," he said, "until recent times have been characterized by ambiguity."

Focusing on his country's plight, Bryant said Liberians now living in the post-Taylor era are facing the "daunting task" of not only reconstructing the country's shattered infrastructure but also building institutions that exemplify the good governance that is "yet so absent in our country."

"Decades of war, violence and bad governance have destroyed the few functioning facilities and institutions that we have boasted of before. Today, our roads, health facilities, water supply systems, electricity grid, schools, public buildings and private homes all lie in ruin," he said.

"Most of these were either wantonly destroyed by fighters ... in search of the spoils of war or left to deteriorate for lack of maintenance during the long conflict years. This situation of decadence and rot was patently manifested during the Taylor administration," he charged.

"As we come to grips with the task of rebuilding Liberia from the ashes of war and putting it on the plain of sobriety, peace and progress, we do so mindful of the fact that the dimensions of our country's reconstruction program are huge, huge. Indeed," he cautioned, "Liberia faces the situation where much of the country's already limited pre-war infrastructure has to be rebuilt from almost scratch. In some cases, whole villages were wiped out."

To illustrate his point, Bryant said farm-to-market roads have fallen into disuse. Millions of dollars are also required to rebuild the John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital, which he said was "once the envy of medicine in West Africa."

Robertsfield, the longtime international airport in Monrovia that once served as a gateway to West Africa, he said, is now in a serious state of disrepair while many parts of the country have lacked electricity and clean water for more than 12 years.

Asked what is different about Liberia today and why he is now optimistic about the country's long-term future, Bryant said: "We are demonstrating prudence. We are demonstrating accountability. We are demonstrating a judicial system that is fair. We want to have rights respected and equity in the law. We are doing all the right things. We are allowing free speech, free movement. We have never had so many newspapers in Liberia as we have today, irrespective of what they say about us [the government]."

Concluding, Bryant acknowledged that it is difficult for someone in his position to brag about changes now under way in Liberia. He urged everyone to find out firsthand about conditions in Liberia by asking the Liberian people and not government officials.

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AEF101 02/09/2004

Pledges to Liberia Exceed U.N. Goal

(Donors commit \$520 million in aid) (700)

By Judy Aita

Washington File United Nations Correspondent

United Nations -- Nations attending the two-day meeting in New York to raise funds for Liberia pledged \$520 million to help the war-ravaged country rebuild.

The International Reconstruction Conference on Liberia, co-sponsored by the United Nations, the United States and the World Bank February 5 and 6, had hoped to raise \$487.7 million over the next two years for programs to demobilize combatants and help them return home, get schooling and find jobs, as well as rebuild roads, restore electricity, reopen health centers, halt the spread of HIV/AIDS, and organize elections in 2005. The response was overwhelming, conference officials said, with more than 95 countries and 45 organizations attending and the final tally of pledges reaching \$520 million.

At the close of the meeting, Callisto Madavo, World Bank regional vice president for Africa, said that the conference was a very strong show of support by the international community for Liberia.

Madavo added, however, that it is important for donors to follow through and commit the funds. It is one thing to pledge funds but another to commit those funds as soon as possible, he said.

Officials of the World Bank, the U.N. Development Program (UNDP) and other agencies said that Liberia needed \$487.7 million, divided between \$243 million for 2004 and \$244.7 million for 2005. An additional \$179.1 million is needed for humanitarian aid, they said.

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, a co-sponsor of the conference, announced the U.S. pledge of \$200 million for humanitarian and reconstruction needs and another \$245 million for U.N. peacekeeping operations in the country.

"President Bush is totally dedicated to this task, and our efforts in Liberia are fully supported by the American Congress as well as the American people. I assure you of full American support," Powell said.

The European Union also announced a pledge of \$200 million. Other contributions announced at the conference included the African Development Bank, \$500,000; World Bank, \$25 million; Nigeria, \$1 million; Denmark, \$1.2 million; Greece, \$40,000; Norway, \$10 million; Germany, 10.8 million euros; Finland, 1.33 million euros; and Italy, 1 million euros.

C. Gyude Bryant, chairman of the National Transitional Government of Liberia, called the conference "a great day for us."

"It marks a new beginning for us, and we assure you that the help you have given today and those who have rallied here today in our support will be used to sustain peace [and] to start a new Liberia where we can live at peace with ourselves and our neighbors and make our West Africa region a better place for everybody," Bryant said.

Bryant explained the reconstruction and national reconciliation measures under way in the country. He said that over the next two years the transitional government is planning to centralize the collection of state revenues through the central bank, reduce the price of rice and petroleum products, open markets for importation of basic commodities, and pay civil servant salaries.

"The next two years will be crucial," he said. "Our vision during this period is to transit from conflict to sustainable peace, create a secure and an enabling environment for democratic elections, and commence the process of recovery."

Jacques Klein, U.N. special envoy in Liberia, said that Liberia desperately needs international help. "This is the third U.N. mission I have led, and nothing I have seen previously compares to the destruction, poverty and desperate need that Liberia represents," he said.

"While the economic situation in Liberia is desperate, political progress is being made and the security situation is improving," Klein added. "We have reached a stage where the peace process has become irreversible. But Liberia is still very much a work in progress."

The U.N. envoy warned, "There will be the inevitable temporary setbacks along the way," but quickly added, "The Liberia people, tired of war and devastation, are committed to peace and determined not to let this opportunity slip away."

The timing has never been better for the international community to help the Liberian people, he said.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

AEF102 02/09/2004

U.S. Health Secretary Sees Global Progress Against AIDS Epidemic

(Remarks at conference on AIDS in Africa, China and Russia) (2720)

U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson says he has seen significant progress and new optimism in other nations as the United States has accelerated its efforts to help combat the global HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Thompson spoke in Washington at a conference February 5 on "The Global Pandemic: AIDS in Africa, China & Russia."

He contrasted what he saw on two trips to Africa in 2002 and 2003. Recognizing the serious problems brought on by the epidemic, he returned to the United States in 2002 and ordered the first draft of what would evolve into the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

Then he returned to Africa last November. "Again I saw the devastation, but this time I also saw a great deal of hope," Thompson said. "The treatment and prevention programs we're supporting are starting to work and show results."

Thompson cited U.S. progress in combating the epidemic through the 1990s that resulted in sharp decreases in AIDS deaths, new cases, and mother-to-child HIV transmission.

"What we've learned about AIDS in America -- how it is spread, what behaviors put people at risk, how to diagnose it, and how to treat it -- has made it easier for us to help people in Africa, China, India, and Russia," he said.

While Africa is the world region currently suffering from the highest levels of HIV/AIDS, studies show that the current rate of infection, if left unchecked, could soon have devastating consequences in Russia, India and China. Thompson said the United States is working to make sure that doesn't happen.

"The United States government has productive bilateral relationships with the governments of India and the People's Republic of China to fight AIDS, and we are working to develop a similar arrangement with the government of Russia," he said. "And Americans are doing much to fight AIDS in all three places."

Thompson said the United States and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria are working to promote vaccine research in India, community based treatment and prevention programs in China, and risk reduction programs in Russia.

Following is a transcript of the Thompson speech:

Address of Tommy G. Thompson

Secretary of Health and Human Services

To the American Enterprise Institute Conference on

The Global Pandemic: AIDS in Africa, China & Russia

Washington, D.C.

February 5, 2004

Thank you, Jim. And good afternoon, everyone. I'm pleased that you've heard from my friends Randall Tobias and Jim Glassman, as well as so many other experts on AIDS and foreign policy.

And I'm pleased to see so many of you take an interest in fighting the spread of AIDS around the world.

As most of you know, AIDS kills more than three million people a year. To put that in terms we can relate to, AIDS kills almost three times as many people every day as the terrorists killed on September 11.

And every day, in addition to killing 8500 people, HIV also infects another 14,000. That's the population of the Washington metro area every six weeks.

Here at home, AIDS has killed more than 475,000 Americans since the epidemic began in 1981. We estimate that about 40,000 more people acquire the virus every year. About 850,000 to 950,000 Americans are currently living with HIV and a quarter of these don't even know they are infected.

The Bush Administration has made an unprecedented and growing commitment to fighting the disease at home and abroad. On Monday, the President requested almost \$20 billion to address HIV and AIDS in 2005, a 28 percent increase over 2001. No government has ever committed the time, energy, and resources to fighting AIDS as the United States under President Bush.

We would spend \$17 billion of these dollars to fight AIDS here in America.

Our scientists at the National Institutes of Health are working to develop and test an effective vaccine, to evaluate potential therapies and microbicides, and to develop better strategies to prevent mother-to-child transmission, sexual transmission, and needle-sharing.

Our prevention and education campaigns encourage people to avoid risky behaviors and develop healthy habits. We keep the blood supply safe. And we offer an AIDS hotline and medical services to people with AIDS.

A year ago, we augmented prevention and treatment efforts by giving rapid FDA approval to a new, speedier HIV test that can be used outside laboratory settings. We expect to approve another such test soon.

Our achievements build on earlier progress. By the early 1990s, as people began to change their behavior, infections in the United States fell from roughly 150,000 a year to about 40,000 a year. In the mid 1990s, as effective combination drug therapies became available AIDS-related deaths began to decline as well. Also, mother-to-child transmission has fallen sharply from 2,500 infections in 1992 to an estimated 300 to 400 infections annually.

We're making special efforts to target treatment and prevention activities to racial and ethnic minorities. In fact, as part of \$6.5 billion in minority health spending to eliminate health disparities, we've doubled our spending to reduce the incidence of the AIDS virus among minority populations.

The AIDS problem is slightly different everywhere you look because different cultural habits encourage different forms of risky behavior. But what we've learned about AIDS in America-how it is spread, what behaviors put people at risk, how to diagnose it, and how to treat it-has made it easier for us to help people in Africa, China, India, and Russia.

I believe that the spread of AIDS can be reversed, not just in America, but around the world. That's why President Bush dedicated \$15 billion over five years to fighting AIDS and caring for the afflicted in 14 focus countries in Africa and the Caribbean and more than 60 others where we have prevention, treatment, and research programs. Of the 42 million people with AIDS, almost 70% live in sub-Saharan Africa.

I'd like to talk about a number of ways that Americans are taking the hard-won lessons of AIDS in America and using them to save lives elsewhere.

Our fellow Americans are contributing as investors, as donors, as taxpayers, as missionaries, as doctors, as nurses, and as researchers.

Let me give you a few examples from Africa.

-- Merck started a program with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to provide anti-retroviral drugs in Botswana.

-- Abbott Laboratories is selling two of its AIDS drugs, Norvir and Kaletra, and a rapid HIV test kit to Africans at cost.

-- Pfizer provides an antifungal drug, Diflucan, free of charge to treat Africans with AIDS. Diflucan treats candida and cryptococcal infections, which frequently attack people with AIDS. In a program sponsored by my Department, workers on Suzuki motorcycles deliver Diflucan as well as anti-retroviral drugs to remote villages in Uganda.

-- Living Water, a faith-based group in Houston, drills village wells in many blighted areas of Africa, a crucial, life-saving message of hope.

-- The Wheelchair Foundation donates wheelchairs to Africans previously trapped by their disabilities who have now gained their freedom.

-- And, of course, private investors in the United States spend \$32 billion every year on health care research, and American taxpayers spend another \$32 billion. Their research yields new and better drugs. And while they may have American consumers in mind, the drugs and devices they develop improve health around the world.

Two years ago, I visited Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, and the Ivory Coast and saw the damage with my own eyes. I held innocent babies who had contracted the virus from their mothers during birth. Many are orphans.

When I came home, I asked my Department to come up with a program to help HIV mothers have healthy babies and live to raise them. This initiative to prevent the transmission of HIV during childbirth became the core of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

In November, I returned to Africa as Chairman of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria along with Ambassador Tobias, Jim Glassman, and the largest public-private delegation ever to visit that continent. Again I saw the devastation, but this time I also saw a great deal of hope. The treatment and prevention programs we're supporting are starting to work and show results.

Ugandan President Museveni and his wife, Janet, go on the radio to remind people to practice abstinence before marriage and faithfulness thereafter. Ugandans have responded to their message, and have successfully cut their infection rate from 21 percent to 6 percent. They demonstrated that encouraging and motivating people to take responsibility for their lives, avoiding risky behavior, and embracing changes in their lifestyles can keep them safe from AIDS.

That is why President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS builds on Uganda's "ABC" model of placing a priority of encouraging abstinence until marriage and being faithful to one's spouse. As

President Museveni says, "When a lion comes into your village, you must raise the alarm loudly."

A couple of years ago, I met with African health ministers in Geneva. Their sense of despair was palpable. But when I visited African countries that are practicing better habits, including Uganda, the health ministers this time were filled with hope.

And so was I.

Many Ugandans with AIDS live in villages so remote only rutted dirt roads reach them. So my Department delivers anti-retroviral medications on the Suzuki motorcycles I mentioned. I went along on one delivery and met a woman named Rosemary.

Her husband and brother both died of AIDS, leaving her to care for seven children and her elderly mother, who live in mud huts. She feeds them with the crops she grows on 2 acres of her brother-in-law's land, which bring in about \$70 a year.

And she has AIDS.

You might expect Rosemary to be bitter. And not that long ago she was close to dying from AIDS. But when she started taking anti-retroviral drugs, her health improved, and she's back to feeding her family. And she's one of the most optimistic people I've ever met.

I also met a carpenter named Samson. AIDS killed his wife, and he has it, too. He goes down to the swamp every day to gather wood. After the wood dries, he makes tables and chairs, which he sells for \$1.50 each. He supports three children on \$5-7 a week. And his wife's grave is right there in the yard, a constant reminder that he uses to warn his children to avoid risky behaviors so they never get the virus.

Like Rosemary, Samson is an optimist. And when he met me, he eagerly asked me to thank Americans and President Bush for sending the anti-retroviral medicines that keep him healthy. I will never forget his gratitude.

AIDS has cut down millions of Africans. Its swath is very broad—ten to twenty percent of adults in many countries are infected, and, in the worst case, more than 35 percent of adults in Botswana have the virus. By contrast, only a small fraction of the populations of China, Russia, and India are infected—less than a percent in India's case. But, in a country with a billion people, even a small increase in the percentage of the population affected could strike down hundreds of millions of our fellow men, women, and children.

We have focused the majority of our efforts at fighting AIDS on Africa and the Caribbean, since they are the hardest-hit. But we have been helping many people in other countries confront AIDS as well.

Almost three years ago, in May of 2001, President Bush and Kofi Annan announced the creation of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. He also announced the first U.S. Government contribution to the fund. The Fund encompasses public-private partnerships and mobilizes resources to fight the spread of disease around the world. The Fund today has over \$5 billion. It has already approved 224 grant programs in 121 countries totaling more than \$2 billion. I am proud to serve as Chairman of the Fund, and proud of the work that the Administration has been doing through the Global Fund as well as through bilateral agreements.

The United States government has productive bilateral relationships with the governments of India and the People's Republic of China to fight AIDS, and we are working to develop a similar arrangement with the government of Russia. And Americans are doing much to fight AIDS in all three places.

For example, we are working with Indian scientists on

AIDS vaccine research. The Global Fund has also approved grants to India to expand government and free market interventions in HIV, TB, and malaria treatment and prevention efforts. And we are evaluating the effectiveness of anti-retroviral drugs and microbicides in Pune.

China, too, has received support from the Global Fund. Through their China CARES program, they are fighting AIDS through community-based HIV treatment, care, and prevention efforts in communities in central China that have been devastated by the spread of the virus through networks of people who sold blood and plasma.

We have been working with community leaders in Russia to reduce risky behaviors among intravenous drug users. We are also working with research organizations that used to be involved in the development of hazardous biological agents, but are now working on developing an HIV vaccine.

Of course, disease prevention only works when people understand it. Many people live in parts of the world with few doctors, and few people who can read.

So we developed an idea to bring basic medical information to them directly. Soon we hope to provide it to communities in Africa and even the United States, but the first place to receive it will be Afghanistan.

For every 1,000 Afghan babies that survive birth, another 145 die at birth or soon after. And mothers die in childbirth at a rate of 1600 mothers per 100,000 live births. But ninety percent of maternal deaths can be prevented with basic health care. And we are starting to provide basic health care and information.

We are hoping to provide 20,000 interactive talking books to women in Afghanistan over the next year to promote health and disease prevention. These talking books can help women regardless of whether they can read.

They provide good, appropriate basic information in both Dari and Pashto on nutrition, sanitation, hygiene, preventive health, safe childbirth, and immunizations. We beta tested demonstration models in Afghanistan and they have been a big success. The women have said they felt empowered.

Someone in this room may know an investor or a philanthropist who wants to distribute a book like this on AIDS prevention in Africa, or the Caribbean, or China or India, and to every area where literacy and basic medical knowledge are in short supply.

I want to encourage every one of you: let's use the technology that we have to help not only Americans, but people around the world. When it comes to life-saving information, there's no time to waste.

And there are more reasons to help than we might think. Saving lives is not the only thing we are achieving when we help others. We are also spreading respect and love for Americans and for our way of life.

-- I saw it in Samson's eyes

-- I heard it in Rosemary's voice

-- I felt it in the relief among the women in Kabul

You've heard of "dollar diplomacy?" Well I advocate doctor diplomacy. It works.

You don't have to share a man's faith to help save his life. You don't have to speak a woman's language to cure her illnesses. You don't have to understand a town's culture to bring it fresh water. But you do have to understand your place in the world and your responsibility to love your neighbors, whether they live down the street or across the ocean.

They say that good fences make good neighbors, and maybe they do. But what I've learned is that good medicine makes good neighbors, and it makes good foreign policy, too.

Thank you.

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